

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Humanitarian Assistance for Rwandan Refugees *August 1, 1994*

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Since August 1993, when a fragile peace was signed between Rwandan Government Forces (RGF) and the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), the United Nations has been actively addressing the humanitarian crisis in Rwanda. On April 6, 1994, President Habyarimana of Rwanda, President Ntaryamira of Burundi and a number of government officials were killed when their plane crashed while approaching the airport in Kigali, Rwanda's capital. This incident ruptured the peace and led to a resumption of the civil war that has now resulted in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Rwandans, many of them Tutsi civilians who were the victims of genocide on the part of radical Hutu elements aligned with the former government.

In early July 1994, the government fell and the RPF assumed power in Kigali, establishing a multi-party government. Since that time they have cooperated fully with us and have even requested human rights monitors to better assure the safety of returning refugees. As a result of the Civil War, the nation's infrastructure has been virtually destroyed. An estimated 2.1 million Rwandan refugees have fled to neighboring Zaire, Burundi, Uganda, and Tanzania, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that a further 2.6 million persons are internally displaced.

The need to respond to disease, starvation, and dehydration in the refugee camps, especially in Zaire and Burundi, led me on July 29, 1994, to direct the expansion of capabilities at the Kigali airport to support the UNHCR relief operation more effectively. By providing a support infrastructure for the relief of refugees and displaced persons out of this capital city, I believe we will be better able to draw Rwandans back to their homes, away from the unsanitary conditions of the refugee camps, and closer to a more centralized distribution point for humanitarian aid. We have engaged in negotiations with the new government in order to promote these objectives. We have urged this new government to broaden its political base, refrain from retribution, respect the rule of law, and otherwise

create the conditions of safety and security that would permit the refugees to return home.

In the afternoon of July 29, 1994, I directed General Joulwan, Commander in Chief, United States European Command, in addition to the relief operations he is already conducting through Goma, Zaire and Entebbe, Uganda, immediately deploy a contingent of U.S. forces, numbering approximately 200, to the airport at Kigali. These forces began to arrive on July 30, 1994. Other forces from Australia and the United Kingdom are committed to this effort in Kigali as well. During this initial phase of "Operation Support Hope," the United States and other committed nations will establish and operate a logistics base to support UNHCR humanitarian relief operations. In this effort, they will open a logistic coordination center for receiving and distributing relief supplies, provide airfield services and cargo handling, and provide security for the airport at Kigali. These efforts are directed at achieving the objectives of U.N. Security Council Resolutions 929, 925 and 918. No organized resistance has been encountered to our efforts to date and none is expected.

United States Armed Forces will remain in Rwanda only as long as necessary to assist the UNHCR in establishing an effective distribution mechanism for humanitarian relief support to the Rwandan people. While it is not possible to estimate precisely how long it will take to satisfy this requirement, we believe that prolonged operations will not be necessary.

We do not intend that U.S. Armed Forces deployed to Rwanda become involved in hostilities. Nonetheless, a majority of the approximately 200 personnel deployed will be assigned to provide force protection and assure security of the Kigali airport. These security forces are equipped and ready to take such measures as may be needed to accomplish their humanitarian mission and defend themselves if necessary.

I have taken these actions pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct our foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive. I am providing this report consistent with the War Powers Resolution in accordance with my desire that the Congress be fully in-

formed. I look forward to cooperating with the Congress in this effort to relieve human suffering.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Thomas S. Foley, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Robert C. Byrd, President pro tempore of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 2.

Remarks Announcing United States Shipbuilding Industry Initiatives *August 2, 1994*

Thank you. Secretary Pena, Secretary Brown, Ambassador Kantor, Admiral Herberger, John Dane, and Doug Ballis. Thanks for saving the sign.

I'd like to introduce the Members of the House who are here who supported this initiative and who have made a major contribution to what we're doing and obviously will be needed in the months and years ahead and whose districts will be affected by the announcements we make today: Congressman Gene Taylor from Mississippi, Congressman Billy Tauzin from Louisiana, Congressman Bobby Scott from Virginia, and Congresswoman Lynn Schenk and Congressman Bob Filner from California. Thank you for your help. Would you stand? [*Applause*]

I'd like to begin by thanking Doug and Richard Vortman, NASSCO's CEO, who is also here, because they gave me one of those seminal experiences you have once in a while in life that takes an idea from your head to your heart. When you know something and you know you ought to do it, that's one thing. But when you feel it, it's another thing altogether.

They stopped work one day in May of 1992, before I was even the nominee of my party for President, so that I could speak to nearly 4,000 of their people and so that I could listen to them. I could see them working together, struggling together, trying to compete in the global economy, building the only commercial ship then being built anywhere in the United States of America. They made me feel welcome, but they also made sure I was aware of what the stakes were and what the issue was and how this was yet one more example of how we could compete and win in an area critical to our future if only we had the policies, the tools, and the drive to do it.

I wish all the people that I met that day could be in this room today. I'm afraid the fire

marshal would evict us all if I had tried to achieve that. But they are the people who really taught me about this issue, and they are the people, they and the millions like them, for whom I fought both before I got here and for whom I try to fight every day in this office.

This is a great day for our American jobs, for our economy, for our shipbuilding industry. It's a great day for the idea that if we all work together we can figure out how to solve our problems even in difficult budgetary times.

Two years ago, every ship in America under construction except one was destined for defense, every one. And now we know that while our United States naval power is still unsurpassed in the world and must remain so, we cannot allow that one commercial vessel I saw under construction in San Diego become a symbol of the past.

We know that one of the things that we needed most in 1992 and one of the things we're trying most to do today is to have a strategy for restructuring our defense industries so that they can fulfill a dual purpose, let me say, not so they can get out of defense work, because we will continue to need major investments in defense technologies for the foreseeable future, but so that with defense being scaled back, those kinds of folks can stay in business by being successful commercially as well.

When I ran for this job, when the economy was going down and the deficit was going up, it was obvious to me that there were many reasons for that, but one of them was that the Government had no strategy. What was our strategy to preserve aerospace, our biggest export? What was our strategy when it came to the shipbuilding industry? What was our strategy to help support our automakers when they had made radical changes all through the 1980's so